



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

## ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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Dear Friends,

In a deeply theological and profoundly spiritual letter to the Catholic faithful, *Spe salvi (On Christian Hope)*, our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, challenges us to reflect on the theological virtue of hope and what it means in our lives. Beginning with an analysis of the concept of faith-based hope, the pope recalls for us that Jesus offers us a hope that has the power to transform our lives. He teaches us so beautifully that “the one that has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of new life.”

With great fidelity to the teaching of the Holy Father and with extraordinary catechetical ability, Jem Sullivan, Ph.D., adjunct professor in the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception at the Dominican House of Studies, in this archdiocese, has created a parish study guide to the Holy Father’s encyclical letter. This catechetical resource of the Archdiocese of Washington was prepared in anticipation of the apostolic visit of Pope Benedict XVI to our nation’s capital, April 15-17, 2008.

The study guide follows closely the encyclical letter and opens each section with a prayer, a Scripture reading and then a catechesis that helps the reader delve more deeply into the words and meaning of *Spe salvi*. Enriching this work is a set of discussion questions focused on specific parts of the encyclical. Finally, the catechetical session concludes with a summary of the material covered and a prayer.

In introducing this study guide, I do so with confidence that it will be a blessing to those who want to understand carefully the Holy Father’s message and at the same time, apply it to daily life in a way that it impacts the personal effort to grow more closely identified with Christ, his gospel and his mission.

It is a pleasure for me to encourage the use of this study guide in parishes throughout the archdiocese.

Faithfully in Christ,

Archbishop of Washington